

JULY 26, 2000

**SCHAKOWSKY CALLS PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY
SHAMELESS FOR LATEST BATCH OF MISLEADING ADS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - During a bipartisan news conference today on Capitol Hill, U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) called the pharmaceutical industry shameless for the latest batch of misleading print, radio, and television advertisements.

"The drug companies are proof that when you have unlimited resources and a willing P.R. firm, anything is possible. Whenever Congress prepares to take serious steps to give seniors access to affordable drugs, the pharmaceutical industry spends millions to protect its profits and scare the public into believing that change is not needed. The drug companies want to keep the status quo of price discrimination and the ability to continue to charge seniors more than pets, individuals more than HMOs, and Americans more than Canadians," Schakowsky said.

□

"This time the drug companies have gone too far with their latest batch of misleading ads. Seniors in the United States know that they're being charged more for the same drugs as their counterparts across the world. Seniors don't want to hear and see drug company propaganda. They want Congress to act and pass a real Medicare prescription drug benefit," Schakowsky added.

The advertisements claim that recent amendments included in the Agriculture Appropriations bill passed by the House and Senate would jeopardize the health of consumers. The amendments would permit pharmacies and wholesale distributors to import and sell American-made medicine that originally had been exported to foreign countries. In addition, the Food and Drug Administration would have to certify that this process would not harm the health of U.S. consumers.

"The drug companies are shameless. They are willing to both exploit and now frighten the seniors. Those imported drugs are the exact same product manufactured by the same drug companies, but sold at much lower prices abroad," Schakowsky said.